

BINGO

A 35 year old patient, married, father of three and guardian of four (cats), had neurodermatitis. That is, the skin on his head was falling off and he was getting a thing about it. Small wonder. He looked awful. He told me he dreamed of mixing cement. Small wonder he had neurodermatitis.

Then he tells me he doesn't know how to mix cement. What kind of a man is it doesn't know how to mix cement? I was mixing cement for my father's path through the garden at 7. At 8 I was breaking bricks for my grandfather's path. I had to play both sides. Don't tell me about neuro -- whatsitsname. I shoulda had a double neurowhatsit.

So he tells me his house needs tuckpointing. Tuckpointing. I'm supposed to know what tuckpointing is. How can I help the guy if he used such language. I tell him to go back and dream his house needs painting instead. Tuckpointing!

So he hired someone to mix cement. He forgot about the painting as soon as I said it. Typical. I don't know how they survive. All houses need painting at least once every two years, unless you're by the sea. In which case you should do it as often as you can afford. And his wife went to a bingo game. What kind of game is bingo. Slang for brandy. How's it come to mean a numbers racket? Who cares.

He had to take care of the kids, put them to bed, then wait for his wife to get home. He couldn't get to his night job. Then comes the lie we've all been waiting for. He says he was a hit and run driver who killed a child. He doesn't see how anyone can leave the scene, but everyone does. So there are no witnesses. So he doesn't exist. No point in telling the poor devil he doesn't depend on his dreams for his existence. He depends and lives through them. There are no mirrors the other side. He prefers to sit this side and guess what's behind him. I sit with him. Guessing.